

Health & Happiness.



A TALK WITH GIRLS

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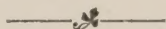
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THERE is nothing in this world which makes such a difference to our lives as good health, but we do not always realise this until we have lost it. On the other hand, there is nothing much harder than to feel tired and depressed, and to have to go about our daily work just the same. Well, whether we are well or ill, strong or weak, there is one thing we should beware of taking, and that is intoxicating drink.

It is so natural to have recourse to it when we are not up to the mark, and we think a glass of wine or beer would do us good, whereas it is almost sure to have an injurious effect upon us. True, we may feel better for the moment, but that is only a passing sensation which leaves us really worse than we were before. We imagine that alcohol cures pain, but the fact is that it only deadens it, and does not touch the cause of our dis-

comfort. We may think it makes us feel less tired, but really it only prevents our feeling for the moment how tired we are, and this is harmful because it uses up our reserve of strength and renders us less able to stand against the sensation of fatigue next time it comes. A cup of tea (freshly made), coffee, cocoa or a glass of hot water sipped slowly, are all stimulating, refreshing drinks, and will do us good instead of harm. Medicated wines, such as "Wincarnis" and "Malt Wine," etc., should also be avoided, because they contain a large amount of alcohol and only a very small quantity of nourishment.

It is most necessary to bear all this in mind because doctors tell us that there comes a time in every woman's life when the impulse to fly to stimulants makes itself felt. We cannot possibly pass through this world without having to bear depression, pain and anxiety, and it is then that, unless we have been forewarned, we are so likely to take that which seems to offer us temporary strength or forgetfulness.

All girls naturally want to be quick and bright. You do not like dull people, and would not like to be slow and dull yourself. Perhaps when you read this you will say, "Well, that's just what a glass of wine or beer does for me. I feel ever so much brighter and more lively after it."

It is one of the most dangerous things about alcohol, that it makes people *think* they are quicker and cleverer, when they are often only being silly and are always slower in thought after taking it. Doctors have made a great many very interesting experiments which all prove that intoxicating drink in quite small quantities renders our mind less open to receive correct impressions and less ready to act upon them.

For instance, setting up type requires rapid thought and a quick hand, and so some compositors were asked to try and do their work with and without alcohol. The men selected were mostly moderate drinkers, and they were given a small amount of intoxicating liquor before they began their

work, and the time was noted which they took in getting through it. Next day they had no intoxicant, and it was found they did their work more quickly and correctly. This was tried over and over again, until it was proved beyond the possibility of doubt that even a very small quantity of wine or beer makes them slower and less accurate in setting up the type.

Happiness? Ah! yes, we all want to be happy, don't we? Earthly happiness is not given to everyone; trial and sorrow must enter sooner or later into every life, but so long as we allow no shadow to come between us and the Master Whom we are trying to serve, we shall have an inward joy which the world can neither give nor take away. We know that wilful wrong-doing can destroy this happiness, but there are many really good people who dim and spoil it, not by any actual sin, but by taking that which affects their minds and renders them less able to respond to the gentle whisper of the Holy Spirit. It makes religion appear dry

and irksome ; bed seems preferable to going to Holy Communion ; thoughts of God, of Heaven and Hell, become vague and only occur at rare intervals. These are the first downward steps which are often the result of taking intoxicating drink ; and even if no worse state is reached, such a condition is very different from that glad and willing offering of body, mind and spirit, which we made at our Confirmation and renew with each Communion.

This does not mean that all total abstainers are well and bright and happy, but it does mean that people who do not touch alcohol in any form are far more *likely* to attain to their highest—physically, mentally and spiritually—than those who habitually take it.

C. R. G.

